DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 450 477 EA 030 911

AUTHOR Odden, Allan
TITLE How To Create and Manage a Decentralized Education System. Getting Better by Design, Volume 2.
INSTITUTION New American Schools Development Corp.
SPONS AGENCY Annenberg Foundation, St. Davids, PA.; Education Commission of the States, Denver, CO.
PUB DATE 1998-00-00
NOTE 21p.; Volume 2 in a series of 7. For others in the series, see EA 030 910, and 030 912 to 030 916.
AVAILABLE FROM New American Schools, 1560 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 901, Arlington, Virginia 22209. Tel: (703) 908-9500; Fax (703) 908-0622.
PUB TYPE Information Analyses (070) -- Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Academic Achievement; *Accountability; *Decentralization; *Decision Making; Educational Change; Educational Innovation; Elementary Secondary Education; *Management Systems; *Organizational Development; *Power Structure; Public Schools; School District Autonomy
IDENTIFIERS *New American Schools

ABSTRACT

Student achievement in American schools must improve dramatically if all young people today are to have equal access to the labor markets and be contributing members of society as adults. Currently, only 20 to 25 percent perform proficiently. Standards-based education reform aims to raise that level to at least 75 percent of students mastering the complex subjects of mathematics, reading, writing, science, and history. Accomplishing this goal means schools must rethink current practices, including their management and organizational systems. The report discusses what is known about the elements of an effective decentralized system, and what research and experience suggest about how to implement such a system. It analyzes the research and imparts a perspective about decentralizing decision making and giving individual schools authority and accountability for higher student achievement. (Contains 51 references.) (DFR)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

New American Schools

How to Create and Manage a Decentralized Education System

ED 450 477

Allan Odden

What do we know about the elements of an effective decentralized system? What do research and experience suggest about how to implement such a system? Allan Odden analyzes the research and shares his perspective about decentralizing decision making and giving individual schools authority and accountability for higher student achievement.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

J. Kovar

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

EA 030911

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Getting Better by Design

VOLUME 2

New American Schools

New American Schools (NAS) is a dynamic coalition of teachers, administrators, parents, community and business leaders, policy makers, and experts from around the country committed to improving achievement for all students by dramatically changing America's classrooms, schools, and school systems.

Unlike many reforms that are add-on programs or isolated projects, NAS designs aim to improve the whole school, from curricula and instruction to funding and community involvement.

Recognizing that one size doesn't fit all schools and communities, NAS offers a choice of different designs—blueprints—for helping all students achieve at high levels. (For information on each design, turn to the inside back cover.)

New American Schools has clear and consistent goals:

- Establish supportive and assistance-oriented school systems.
- Develop school and teacher capacity to teach all students to high academic standards.
- Spend resources wisely with an eye to student results.
- Build broad and deep community support for education improvement and excellence.
- Make America's public schools places where all students excel.

New American Schools is results-oriented.

In a short period of time, NAS has generated impressive results. In many schools using a NAS design:

- students are producing higher-quality work, achieving at higher levels, and showing improvement on standardized tests and other measures of performance;
- discipline problems are down and student attendance and engagement are up;
- both teacher enthusiasm and community involvement are on the rise; and
- student achievement is improving quicker than conventional wisdom suggests is possible.

New American Schools helps partner districts restructure.

To overcome traditional barriers to school excellence, NAS provides focused assistance to its district partners in five key areas:

- rethinking school finance, including investment funding and resource reallocation strategies;
- revamping professional development infrastructures to support whole-school transformation;
- setting high academic standards and linked assessments;
- giving schools authority to make decisions about curriculum, staff, and spending as well as holding them accountable for results; and
- engaging parents and the public in improvement efforts.

New American Schools believes in shared accountability.

The foundation of NAS is a strong partnership built on shared responsibility for results. Clearly defined roles link partners to one another and to results. All stakeholders in a NAS community—teachers, administrators, district leaders, parents, NAS Design Teams—are expected to take responsibility and to be held accountable for helping to improve student achievement.

NAS partners also commit to regular and rigorous assessment of their performance, resulting in the sound business practice of continuous improvement. The RAND Corporation is the independent evaluator of the New American Schools' effort.

Getting Better by Design

How to Create and Manage a Decentralized Education System

Allan Odden

Student achievement in American schools must improve dramatically if all young people today are to have equal access to the labor market and be contributing members of society as adults (Murnane & Levy, 1996). Currently, only 20 to 25 percent of students perform proficiently. Standards-based education reform aims to raise that level of achievement to at least 75 percent of students mastering the complex subjects of mathematics, reading, writing, science, and history. This is an ambitious goal, and to accomplish it, schools must rethink current practices—including, at the very core, their management and organizational systems—and use all of the resources they can muster in substantially more productive ways.

Raising Performance with Lessons from Business

Many organizations have faced pressures to dramatically improve results, and what they have learned offers valuable lessons to schools. To produce higher levels of performance, successful organizations: set clear performance goals at the top; flatten the organizational structure; decentralize power and authority into the hands of work teams; involve employees in making key decisions about how to organize and conduct their work; and hold employees accountable for results (Barzelay, 1992; Katzenbach & Smith, 1993; Lawler, 1986, 1992; Mohrman, 1994; Mohrman & Wohlstetter, 1994).

Allan Odden, Ph.D.

Dr. Odden is Professor of Educational Administration at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He is also Co-Director of the Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE), a national research center funded by the U.S. Department of Education. CPRE is a consortium of the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Pennsylvania, Harvard, Michigan, and Stanford universities. He is director of the CPRE Education Finance Research Program and a principal investigator for the CPRE Teacher Compensation project, funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts and the Carnegie Corporation.

Dr. Odden is an international expert on education finance, school site-based financing, educational policy, school-based management, teacher compensation, district and school decentralization, and educational policy implementation. He is currently directing research projects on school-based finance, school-based management, and teacher compensation.

Standards-based and school-based education reforms are the embodiment of this strategy in the public school system. They seek to educate students to higher achievement levels by setting common goals and high standards; measuring performance and maintaining accountability at the top (district or state); and giving greater authority over education management, governance, and finance to individual schools.

Current research shows that standards-based district- and school-level restructuring can work—can result in improved student performance—when designed with a key set of elements. This paper outlines the key research and findings on decentralization and school-based management and describes the essential elements of both in detail.

A key conclusion of the research on decentralization is that meaningful school-based management entails more than creating school-site councils with the power to make some decisions. To boost results, a school-based management structure must be comprehensive and carefully designed, and it must be used to implement rigorous curriculum standards in a restructured school organization.

". . . meaningful school-based management entails more than creating school-site councils with the power to make some decisions."

Restructuring with the Help of NAS Designs

The high-performance designs provided by New American Schools (NAS, 1995) offer integrated components that help schools improve student performance. All NAS designs have a high-quality curriculum and instructional program at their core, help schools organize differently, and involve teachers in a wide range of decision-making roles. Current data confirm that schools implementing NAS and other whole-school designs can experience significant improvements in student performance (Comer, 1993–94; New American Schools, 1996; Slavin, et al., 1996; Herman & Stringfield, 1997).

But for NAS or other designs to work, each school must be allowed to restructure itself to fit its chosen design. And districts must be active in creating environments that support school sites in engaging in whole-school curriculum, instruction, and financial restructuring. In sum, the district must redesign the education system through decentralization to support high performance, self-managed schools of design.

An Overview of Effective Decentralization

The core concept of a "decentralized district" is that schools should not be regulated in detail; rather, schools should enter into performance agreements that allow each school to select a strategy—such as implementing a NAS design—to achieve a set of specified results.[1] These agreements are similar to those under which charter schools operate, as well as many magnet and special-program schools. The school has the authority to select its own programs and staff—provided its students perform at the level the school says they will.

Performance agreements have two parties: the local school board, which promises to waive certain rules or establish conditions to allow a school to provide a focused and distinctive instructional program; and the school, which promises to raise (or continue to maintain) student achievement levels to meet agreed-upon performance goals, to implement a specified vision (such as a NAS design), and to use public funds and assets responsibly.

In this type of decentralized system, the local school board enters into a performance agreement with each school. Creating each agreement involves negotiating to reach consensus on the magnitude of increased

[1] The concept of a school district operating through school-specific performance agreements, and some of the language used in this section, are based in part on the work of Paul T. Hill. See Hill, Paul T., Lawrence Pierce, and James Guthrie. *Reinventing Public Education: How Contracting Can Transform America's Schools*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997.

5

achievement the school commits to produce and for which it will be held accountable, and how and when achievement will be measured.

In order to set performance goals, a decentralized district needs a well-developed instructional-guidance system, which focuses schools on the teaching and learning program. The core elements of an instructional-guidance system include high-quality curriculum standards, ambitious student-performance standards, and an assessment system that produces measures of performance relative to the standards. Each NAS or other whole-school design must then align its curriculum program to the district's content and performance standards, meeting or exceeding those standards.

In drafting the performance agreement, each school should set a long-term five-year goal and annual performance targets. The agreement should state clearly the core performance targets for which the school will be held accountable. Thereafter, each year the district should publish detailed performance reports for each school, identifying the targets met and missed.

Within this vision of decentralization, each school becomes a semi-independent organization with its own staff, mission, and approach to instruction. The local school board and central office become, in effect, investors and portfolio managers of a system of schools, rewarding schools that meet their performance targets, supporting expansion or imitation of successful school designs, creating infrastructures that deliver needed professional development (see "How to Rebuild a Local Professional Development Infrastructure" by Bruce Haslam), providing assistance to underperforming schools, terminating and reconstituting failed schools, and engaging parents and the community in support of whole-school transformation (see "How to Engage Educators, Parents, and the Community in Design-Based School Change" by Mary Anne Schmitt and Carrie Chimerine Irvin).

Recognizing the Limits of Decentralization

Before we go further, it's important to state the limits of decentralization. Studies show that decentralization *alone* rarely, if ever, produces higher student achievement, and poorly designed decentralization strategies produce little or no effect (Hannaway, 1996; Malen, Ogawa and Kranz, 1990; Murphy & Beck, 1995; Newmann & Wehlage, 1995; Summers and Johnson, 1996; Wohlstetter and Odden, 1992). Although school decentralization combined with incentives for improved performance (Hannaway, 1996) offers a potentially more powerful approach, it, too, is insufficient by itself.

As Wohlstetter (1995) concluded from a four-year international study, school-based management is not effective when the following are true: it is adopted as an end in itself; principals work from their own agendas rather than integrally involving teachers; decision-making power is lodged in a single council (the typical definition of school-based management in the United States) and business proceeds as usual.

> *" . . . it's important to state the limits of decentralization. Studies show that decentralization* alone *rarely, if ever, produces higher student achievement, and poorly designed decentralization strategies produce little or no effect."*

Characteristics of Effective School-Based Management

To produce much higher levels of student achievement, Wohlstetter and other researchers[2] have found that school districts must change to ensure that individual schools:

- have authority over budget and personnel;
- establish teacher-led decision-making teams and a professional culture;
- focus on continuous improvement through ongoing, schoolwide professional development in curriculum, instruction, and management skills;

[2] Beck & Murphy, 1996; Darling-Hammond, 1996; Joyce & Calhoun, 1996; Mohrman, Lawler & Mohrman, 1992; Newmann & Wehlage, 1995; Odden, Wohlstetter & Odden, 1995; Robertson, Wohlstetter & Mohrman, 1995; Smylie, Lazarus & Brownlee-Conyers, 1996; Wohlstetter, 1995; Wohlstetter, Mohrman & Robertson, 1996; Wohlstetter, Smyer & Mohrman, 1994.

SEVEN CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT

Schools produce higher levels of student achievement when they:

- have authority over budget and personnel;
- establish teacher-led decision-making teams and a professional culture;
- focus on continuous improvement through ongoing, schoolwide professional development in both curriculum and instruction, and management skills;
- create a well-developed system for sharing school-related information with a broad range of school constituents;
- develop ways to reward staff behavior that help achieve performance objectives—and to sanction those that don't meet the goals;
- are led by principals who can facilitate and manage change; and
- use district and state goals, standards, and benchmarks to focus reform efforts on changing curriculum and instruction.

- create a well-developed system for sharing information with a broad range of constituents;
- develop ways to reward staff behavior that help achieve performance objectives—and sanctions for those that don't meet the goals;
- are led by principals who can facilitate and manage change; and
- use district and state goals, standards, and benchmarks to focus reform efforts on changing curriculum and instruction.

Five Steps in Designing a Decentralized School District

Although effective decentralization ultimately places the responsibility for greater student achievement on the shoulders of each school site and its staff, effective decentralization begins with district-level staff who recognize the value of greater autonomy for schools and who provide support for the decentralization process. To implement an effective education reform strategy, districts must take the following five key steps:

1. Create awareness of the need for fundamental change at both the school and central-office levels.
2. Develop a mission statement that emphasizes student achievement in the core academic subjects, bolstered by curriculum-content standards, student-performance standards, and achievement tests matched to the standards.
3. Supply investment funding for necessary expenses to jump start the decentralization, restructuring, and resource reallocation processes required for school-based change and NAS or other whole-school design implementation.
4. Create an operating environment that supports schools in implementing their high-performance vision: school authority over the budget and personnel functions, a rich information system including fiscal data, a range of professional development programs, and a full-fledged accountability system with rewards and sanctions.
5. Define and implement new roles for the school board, superintendent, and central office staff that enable the district to set the direction and run the accountability system, while the schools—led by strong and effective principals—do the direct work to accomplish their performance goals.

The remainder of this paper will explore the most effective ways for district leaders to take each of these steps, with the ultimate goal of attaining greater student achievement districtwide.

> *"Teaching students to high standards cannot be done by marginally changing today's schools. District leadership is vital in helping schools and central office staff understand that fundamental whole-school restructuring is required to accomplish more ambitious goals."*

Step 1
Create Awareness of the Need for Fundamental Change

Teaching students to high standards cannot be done by marginally changing today's schools. District leadership is vital in helping schools and central office staff understand that fundamental whole-school restructuring is required to accomplish more ambitious goals. Helping school and district staff recognize the gap between current levels of achievement and the levels needed to enable all students to participate fully in the economy and society of the next century is a first step in developing this understanding.

The importance of this task cannot be underestimated. If schools and district staff are convinced major change is required to meet new

goals, they'll be better able to weather the challenges of decentralization, restructuring, and resource reallocation.

One way to create this awareness is to work with the entire district community and faculties within each school to analyze current levels of achievement, including assessing the performance of subgroups within the district and each school—such as achievement differences between low- and high-income students; between minority and non-minority students; and, in mathematics and science, between boys and girls. The goal is to extend the analysis beyond numbers to identify significant factors behind unacceptable levels of achievement. For example, a significant problem affecting overall achievement in elementary schools may be (and often is) large numbers of students who do not read well. Another factor may be a weak curriculum; students may be poor writers, for instance, because writing is not taught or students do not receive detailed feedback on their writing.

"Many NAS districts sponsor symposia and fairs that allow teachers and administrators to interact with the leaders of the NAS Design Teams. . . . These activities show schools and faculties a means for accomplishing what might otherwise seem unattainable. They provide schools with alternative visions for how they can accomplish the goal of helping their students reach higher levels of achievement."

The goal of this analysis is to ensure that school and central office staff—as well as community members—understand current levels of achievement, their distance from desired levels, and reasons why these gaps exist. This helps everyone understand the scope of the task of reaching higher levels of performance.

Another part of building awareness is helping schools learn about emerging schoolwide strategies—including NAS school designs—that show promise for producing higher achievement. Districts should arrange for faculty representatives to visit schools implementing NAS designs, ideally schools that have student populations similar to their own. School visits not only expose faculties to powerful new designs but also let them see other teachers educating students like theirs to much higher levels of achievement. It shows that doing a better—even a much better—job is possible. Many NAS districts sponsor symposia and fairs that allow teachers and administrators to interact with the leaders of the NAS Design Teams and practitioners from schools implementing the designs. These activities show schools and faculties a means for accomplishing what might otherwise seem unattainable. They provide schools with alternative visions for how they can accomplish the goal of helping their students reach higher levels of achievement.

The point here is that engaging in the hard job of school restructuring is not a task that districts can assume most faculties will take on willingly. Change is tough. Before the restructuring process can begin, districts play a vital role in convincing schools that change is needed, that there are viable options for bringing it about, and that there will be rewards for reaching higher performance goals—and consequences for not doing so. Without such understanding, a school may never mount the energy and commitment needed to fully and successfully implement a NAS or other whole-school design.

Step 2
Develop a Mission Statement, Standards, and Assessments Focused on Student Achievement

To guide, focus, and assess the results of such profound change, districts need to define their mission, create rigorous curriculum-content and student-performance standards, and select an assessment system to measure results. Key tactics include the following points.

- Make the mission statement simple and state the key goal: to teach all students to high standards in the core academic areas (generally mathematics, science, language arts, and history/social studies). The mission should signal that the first priority is increased student achievement in the basic academic subjects.
- Bolster the mission statement with a set of curriculum standards and student-performance standards that outline what the district wants students to know and be able to do. In many districts, content and performance standards are more specific versions of emerging state content and performance standards. NAS designs' standards may need to be adapted to the district's standards; Design Teams provide linking mechanisms for this purpose.
- Create an assessment system that provides baseline data and that will indicate progress in accomplishing both the district's overall goals and each school's performance targets. Such a system should be criterion-referenced and benchmarked to specific standards of performance, with results sent to schools soon after test administration. The ideal would be a district testing system benchmarked to state performance standards and to key national or international performance standards, such as those in the National Assessment of Educational Progress or the Third International Mathematics and Science Study.

This district role is critical for both focusing the school-based management effort and measuring the progress of individual schools and the district as a whole in achieving the ultimate goal—higher student achievement. All too often districts deploy a school-based management strategy to improve performance but do not measure progress—or even have a system for assessing results (Summers & Johnson, 1996). That is a pitfall to be avoided.

Step 3
Supply Investment Funding to Jump Start the Decentralization, Restructuring, and Resource Reallocation Processes

A third district responsibility for initiating the decentralization and restructuring process is investing up front in creating the infrastructure necessary to support whole-school improvement. One example is developing a rich information system that includes detail on individual student achievement. A comprehensive, school-based, computerized information system at the district level can reduce the need for schools to hire administrative staff.

Another need pertains to a technology infrastructure. A school may need to be rewired and its electrical system updated for digital and voice communication. Most designs also require local schoolwide and districtwide computer networks.

> *"A third district responsibility for initiating the decentralization and restructuring process is investing up front in creating the infrastructure necessary to support whole-school improvement."*

High-performance designs also require more collaborative work within schools, a new style of principal leadership, and implementation of high-performance management. These needs require funding for professional development.

Further, because many schools lack the financial resources to initially engage NAS (and other) Design Teams, districts need a central source of funds to help schools begin the ambitious training necessary to effectively implement a whole-school design. For this purpose, some districts set aside training money to cover each school's first- and second-year NAS Design Team costs as a way to jump start school planning and implementation and to provide the time schools need to reallocate their existing resources.

Some high-performance designs also require new curriculum and instructional materials. Schools selecting these designs may need funding to purchase such items.

"To create an effective decentralized school system, research shows that the district must place in the hands of each school four key resources: power, professional development, information, *and an* accountability system with clear rewards and sanctions."

In short, there are several areas that require up-front district investment to create an infrastructure that supports school reform. Although, ultimately, each school must meet its ongoing operational costs, including those for maintaining technology, districts should assess the level and nature of the start-up investments and budget for them. Gradually setting aside a fixed percentage of the district's operating budget, such as one to two percent, is one way to produce this investment fund.

Step 4
Create an Operating Environment That Supports Schools in Implementing Their High-Performance Vision

A district's most challenging task is to design a decentralized education system that supports schools. Districts need to create the conditions that allow schools both to restructure around a NAS design and to reallocate their resources to the needs of the design. To create an effective decentralized school system, research shows that the district must place in the hands of each school four key resources: *power, professional development, information,* and an *accountability system with clear rewards and sanctions.* Districts also must hire and train principals who can move the restructuring effort forward in their schools.

Power: Decision-Making Authority Over Personnel and the Budget

Districts should provide each school with the authority to recruit, select, develop, and evaluate personnel. Relatedly, each school should receive a lump-sum budget and the freedom to spend the dollars in ways that support its high-performance design, subject only to a constraint on the total amount. Schools can then use this budget authority to reallocate resources to the needs of their chosen NAS or other whole-school design (Miles, 1995; Miles & Darling-Hammond, 1997; Odden & Clune, 1995).

Creating and implementing a school-based financing system that provides schools with budget authority to reallocate their resources to design needs is critically important. This shift would entail giving schools control of about 85 percent of all operating dollars—both general and categorical—on a per-pupil, lump-sum basis. Schools need full authority over the instruction and pupil-support budgets quickly in order to fully engage in the resource reallocation required to finance NAS and other high-performance designs.

This shift can be accomplished in several steps. First, provide schools with a lump sum of dollars from the general fund that covers instruction, instructional support, and pupil support; these three functions could total about 75 percent of the budget. Districts could "weight" elementary, middle, and high school students differently in this process to reflect current resource-allocation practices.

Second, decentralize the operational and some portion of the maintenance budgets. Experience shows that schools often find ways to use these dollars more efficiently and want control over these budget areas once they have gained control over instructional monies.

Third, consider how to approach the issue of providing computer technologies to all schools.

As discussed in Step 3, the district should focus on the needed infrastructure, including a wide-area network; an interactive, on-line system connecting all sites with the district server; and necessary wiring within each school. Schools need the freedom to design the specific technology applications they want, which are sometimes specified in the design they select. For long-term purposes, consider a one-time capital appropriation to finance the districtwide infrastructure. Over time, suggest that schools protect five percent of their budgets for ongoing computer and technology purchases, upgrading, and maintenance. As part of the budget decentralization process, decide which portions of the budget will be reallocated at all schools for the purpose of ongoing technology support and training.

Professional Development

This area covers developing the skills, knowledge, and competencies needed to engage in restructuring and in teaching a high-standards curriculum (Corcoran, 1995; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Corcoran & Goertz, 1995; Little, 1993). Professional knowledge and skills are needed in at least four areas:

1. working together effectively in group or team settings;
2. developing new curricula and the pedagogical expertise required to teach a high-standards instructional program;

FIVE STEPS IN DESIGNING A DECENTRALIZED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Step 1
Create Awareness of the Need for Fundamental Change

Step 2
Develop a Mission Statement, Standards, and Assessments Focused on Student Achievement

Step 3
Supply Investment Funding to Jump Start the Decentralization, Restructuring, and Resource Reallocation Processes

Step 4
Create an Operating Environment That Supports Schools in Implementing Their High-Performance Vision

Step 5
Define and Implement New Roles for School District Leadership

3. counseling, parent outreach, and other roles typically performed by non-teaching staff; and
4. managing the fiscal aspects of the school, including the expertise to reallocate resources to support whole-school designs (Odden & Wohlstetter, 1995; Wohlstetter, Mohrman & Robertson, 1996).

The importance of professional development cannot be overstated; insufficient attention given to developing needed skills and expertise can doom an otherwise well-designed decentralization strategy. "How to Rebuild a Local Professional Development Infrastructure" by Bruce Haslam, which is included in this series, presents a model for the organization of professional development in a decentralized system.

"The importance of professional development cannot be overstated; insufficient attention given to developing needed skills and expertise can doom an otherwise well-designed decentralization strategy."

A straightforward way to fund such continuous, ongoing training is to require budget set-asides at both the district and site levels, totaling about three percent of the district's operating budget. A portion of these monies could be retained by the district to train administrators and principals in areas that complement the training and support provided to implement a specific design. For example, districts can train all staff in the business, management, and fiscal skills required for school-based budgeting.

Information

If schools are provided the power, responsibility, autonomy, and accountability for producing results, they must also have access to a wide array of good information—information that currently usually stays in the central office—in order to make wise decisions.

First, sites need to learn about a variety of high-performance school designs. Compiling a list of such designs and ensuring that all schools know about them are key district responsibilities. The NAS models constitute one set of designs, but there are other whole-school models, including the Accelerated Schools Project, The Edison Project, Paideia schools, Core Knowledge schools, and Learner-Centered schools.

Schools also need a great deal of data and information for effective management, including district and site revenues, costs of school staff and materials, parent- and student-satisfaction data, benchmarks from other schools, and data on the local community. Other types of useful information include curriculum data, such as an instructional-management program that allows teachers to track student performance relative to curriculum content and performance standards, and staff personnel data.

It's recommended that the entire information package be organized into a relational data system and placed on an interactive computer system with linkups at each school site. Developing such an automated information system is one way to reduce administrative staff at both the school site and central office, and thus produce new money for investments in the design implementation process.

To be most effective, schools should actively share information with the major stakeholders in the school community. Providing instant computer access to the information base is one strategy. An automated information system also makes it easier to share information within a school. A strategy embodied in all NAS designs involves having a series of interconnected teacher teams "managing" the operations and instructional program of the school. Instant computer access enables these teams to get the needed information to conduct their tasks and to share information and data across teams as they accomplish their goals.

Accountability, Rewards, and Sanctions

We have already discussed the value and processes involved in developing educational

goals, assessment measures, and an educational progress reporting system—all vital in helping schools recognize the need for change, in guiding progress, and in ensuring accountability for success or lack of success. Rewards and sanctions are also a necessary part of the accountability system.

Rewards generally mean teacher compensation (Conley & Odden, 1995; Firestone, 1994; Kelley & Odden, 1995; Mohrman, Mohrman & Odden, 1996; Odden, 1996; Odden & Conley, 1992; Odden & Kelley, 1997). For most schools, it means shifting teacher compensation from a seniority-based pay system to a knowledge- and skill-based pay system. The latter rewards teachers and other school staff for developing the expertise needed to accomplish school goals. Such a system must specify the knowledge areas that qualify for pay increments and provide a means of assessing whether teachers have attained the necessary competencies—for example, increased depth of content and instructional skills in one or more subject areas; other skills such as curriculum development, staff development, and counseling students; and management skills for developing and monitoring school budgets, running decision-making teams, and monitoring a school's strategic plan. Such a structure also could include a salary increase for certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (Odden & Kelley, 1997).

A second component of pay could include schoolwide performance bonuses awarded for producing *improvements* in student performance, such as the performance awards given by the Dallas, Texas and Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina school systems and throughout Kentucky's schools. Performance awards could include salary bonuses, or bonus funds could be made available for school improvement or professional development activities. Another option is gain-sharing programs, which allow the faculty or school to keep as a bonus any dollars saved by restructuring the school—provided student achievement targets are maintained. On a national average of $6,000 per student, a one-percent budget set-aside by the district would produce funds to provide site professional staff with bonuses of at least $1,000 and site-classified staff with $500 bonuses for meeting targets for improvement in student achievement (Odden & Kelley, 1997).

Along with rewards, a full-fledged accountability structure also includes sanctions that go into effect when a school consistently fails to meet performance targets. This might include an intervention and reconstitution program for such schools. Although there is no one best way to design such a program, districts cannot let low-achieving schools exist forever. They first need assistance; if such assistance does not produce improved performance, then some sort of reconstitution will be required, under which the school leadership, portions of the faculty, and the institutional program are changed.

> ***"Along with rewards, a full-fledged accountability structure also includes sanctions that go into effect when a school consistently fails to meet performance targets."***

Principal Leadership

Finally, the district must recruit and train principals. Principals in a system where schools act as independently managed entities need different skills from principals in schools that are traditionally organized and run. Effective principals, using facilitative leadership, manage a large-scale school improvement process in which teachers share in making key decisions and engage in curricular and instructional leadership, and in which the principals themselves serve as brokers of information, knowledge, and resources between the faculty and the broader community (Murphy & Louis, 1994; Odden & Wohlstetter, 1995; Wohlstetter, Mohrman & Robertson, 1996). Producing this

type of leader usually requires both new recruitment strategies that employ different standards for selecting and hiring principals, and a substantial principal professional development strategy.

Step 5
Define and Implement New Roles for School District Leadership

Decentralization puts district leaders and central office staff in a new context.[3] One of the crucial changes in district-level governance that must take place involves identifying new roles for the school board, superintendent, and central office staff—roles that enable the district's leadership to set the direction for the schools and run the accountability system, while at the same time freeing up the schools to do the hands-on work to accomplish their performance goals. Key functions of central office staff in a decentralized system include: facilitating the efforts of schools to produce results; creating policies and mechanisms for supporting ongoing professional development and continuous school improvement (see "How to Rebuild a Local Professional Development Infrastructure" by Bruce Haslam); engaging the community in supporting reform (see "How to Engage Educators, Parents, and the Community in Design-Based School Change" by Mary Anne Schmitt and Carrie Chimerine Irvin); setting performance targets; authorizing schools to receive public funds; assessing the performance and productivity of schools; holding schools accountable for results; assisting low-performing schools; and helping students whose schools have failed to find better alternatives.

"One of the crucial changes in district-level governance that must take place involves identifying new roles for the school board, superintendent, and central office staff—roles that enable the district's leadership to set the direction for the schools and run the accountability system, while at the same time freeing up the schools to do the hands-on work to accomplish their performance goals."

Although schools by necessity must function more autonomously, they will still need assistance, technical advice, staff training, and some business-oriented services. Here is how district-level players can meet these needs through new roles.

The School Board as Portfolio Manager

Boards of education can provide the impetus and be powerful advocates for school change. They can also present difficult roadblocks to successful school transformation. Effective efforts by boards include: establishing long-term contracts and solid working relationships with the superintendent; serving as advocates for high-performance schools of design; and sustaining support for ongoing, design-based professional development for teachers. In a decentralized system, the board should also create the operating conditions that allow schools to engage in the school-based restructuring and resource-allocation processes, and ensure that all students receive a high-quality education. For instance, the board might negotiate performance agreements with each school, setting benchmarks within the system.

The Superintendent as CEO

In a decentralized system, the superintendent's main role is to provide leadership—creating the expectation that every school will have a comprehensive and workable plan to ensure that all students meet high standards. The superintendent serves as the chief executive officer (CEO) of a highly diversified organization—a system of high-performing schools of design. In this role, the superintendent is heavily engaged in long-range planning and analysis of the match

[3] Some of the ideas in this section are drawn from a more extensive set of proposals for transformation of school district actors contained in Hill et al., 1997 (see references).

between the community's needs and the mixture of schools provided by the system.

Superintendents no longer have direct responsibility for the day-to-day management of schools or for the management of a functionally organized central office. Instead, they supervise a staff responsible for such functions as negotiating agreements with schools and new school providers, including intensive design-based professional development programs for all teachers; advising the school board on whether to approve proposed agreements; fostering a shared commitment among all members of the school community; managing a lottery-based student admissions process for schools that are oversubscribed; publishing unbiased information about all schools' programs and performance; and other new central office roles that are outlined below.

Central Office Staff as School Support Providers

In a decentralized system, the central office administrative structure as we know it—with large numbers of professional development, curriculum, or supervisory specialists—no longer exists. Instead, among their other new duties, central office staff play important roles in gaining public support for reform by providing the policies and structures that support high-quality professional development (see "How to Rebuild a Local Professional Infrastructure" by Bruce Haslam) and administering the accountability system. In addition, they are responsible for helping schools gain access to independent sources of help in these areas and supporting them as they implement their individual improvement plans.

To help sites select different providers, central office staff, for example, might rate the performance of various providers and provide a brokerage service for schools seeking particular kinds of help. (Central offices and state-funded regional service districts might also compete for schools' business, but they do not mandate themselves as sole providers.)

The main instruction-related functions of the central office are to create curriculum content and student-performance standards, and to develop and administer an assessment system to monitor student, school, and system performance. Central office staff also maintain a school-based information system to support the superintendent's long-range planning activities, allocate funds to schools on a per-pupil formula, provide automated fiscal services, and hire and supervise contractors who collect and disseminate information on schools and school performance. A critical and expanded function is to administer a real accountability system. Finally, central office staff sponsor parent information centers, intended to help parents understand reform-related changes in schools and inform the school choice process.

> ***"In a decentralized system, the central office administrative structure as we know it—with large numbers of professional development, curriculum, or supervisory specialists—no longer exists."***

District leaders must take considerable initiative in orienting central office staff to these new roles. It involves shifting staff from monitoring roles to activities that support school-based personnel in making good decisions. This necessitates significant training of central office staff.

This orientation task will include union negotiations. Although NAS has found unions to be quite supportive of its designs and of the freedoms schools need to implement them, many contract provisions, particularly those focused on work conditions, could inhibit implementation of design elements. Over time, the district and the union will need to overhaul union contracts to eliminate such obstacles.

Toward Effective and Successful Decentralization

To enable individual schools to restructure using a whole-school, high-performance design, districts must restructure as well. They must create awareness that fundamental change is needed to reach the goals of teaching more students to high standards and invest in activities that will get the restructuring and decentralization process underway. They must develop curriculum and student-performance standards, and administer an aligned assessment system that provides data on how well students, schools, and the overall system are performing. They must give schools power over budget and personnel functions, create a school-based information system, provide an infrastructure for professional development that supports whole-school change, and implement an accountability system with clear rewards and sanctions. They must create and administer a results-oriented accountability system. They must build public awareness of and support for reform. And they must orient district-level personnel to new roles and functions that support and sustain school-based management, restructuring, accountability—and hopefully, greater and lasting levels of student achievement. ◆

"To enable individual schools to restructure using a whole-school, high-performance design, districts must restructure as well. They must create awareness that fundamental change is needed . . . and invest in activities that will get the restructuring and decentralisation process underway. They must develop curriculum and student-performance standards, [and a] system that provides data on how well students, schools, and the overall system are performing."

References

ON NAS AND NAS IMPACTS

Comer, James P. (1993–94). *A Brief History and Summary of The School Development Program; Summary of School Development Program (SDP) Effects*. New Haven, CT: Yale University, Yale Child Study Center.

Herman, Rebecca & Sam Stringfield. (1997). *Ten Promising Programs for Educating All Children: Evidence of Impact*. Arlington, VA: Educational Research Service.

New American Schools. (1995). *An Introduction*. Arlington, VA: NAS.

New American Schools. (1996). *Working Towards Excellence: Early Indicators from Schools Implementing New American Schools Designs*. Arlington, VA: NAS.

Slavin, Robert E., Nancy A. Madden, Lawrence J. Dolan, Barbara A. Wasik, Steven Ross, Lana Smith, & Marcella Dianda. (1996). "Success for All: A Summary of Research." *Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk*, 1(1), 41–76.

GENERAL

Bruer, John. (1993). *Schools for Thought*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Murnane, Richard & Frank Levy. (1996). *Teaching the New Basic Skills*. New York: The Free Press.

ON SCHOOL RESTRUCTURING AND SITE-BASED MANAGEMENT IN A STANDARDS-BASED EDUCATION CONTEXT

Barzelay, Michael. (1992). *Breaking Through Bureaucracy: A New Way for Managing in Government*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Beck, Lynn & Joseph Murphy. (1996). *The Four Imperatives of a Successful School*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Darling-Hammond, Linda. (1996). "Beyond Bureaucracy: Restructuring Schools for High Performance." In Susan Fuhrman and Jennifer O'Day, Eds. *Rewards and Reform: Creating Educational Incentives That Work*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Hannaway, Jane. (1996). "Management Decentralization and Performance-Based Incentives: Theoretical Consideration for Schools." In Eric Hanushek and Dale Jorgenson, Eds. *Improving America's Schools: The Role of Incentives* (pp. 97–109). Washington, DC: National Research Council.

Hill, Paul T., Lawrence Pierce, and James Guthrie. (1997). *Reinventing Public Education: How Contracting Can Transform America's Schools*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Joyce, Bruce & Emily Calhoun, Eds. (1996). *Learning Experiences in School Renewal: An Exploration of Five Successful Programs*. Eugene, OR: ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management.

Katzenbach, Jon R. & Douglas K. Smith. (1993). *The Wisdom of Teams: Creating the High-Performance Organization*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Lawler, Edward E. (1986). *High Involvement Management*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Lawler, Edward E. (1992). *The Ultimate Advantage: Creating the High Involvement Organization*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Malen, Betty, Rodney T. Ogawa & Jennifer Kranz. (1990). "What Do We Know About School-Based Management? A Case Study of the Literature—A Call for Research." In William H. Clune and John F. Witte, Eds. *Choice and Control in American Education, Volume 2: The Practice of Decentralization and School Restructuring* (pp. 289–342). Philadelphia: Falmer Press.

Mohrman, Susan Albers. (1994). "High Involvement Management in the Private Sector." In Susan Albers Mohrman & Priscilla Wohlstetter, Eds. *School-Based Management: Organizing for High Performance* (pp. 25–52). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Mohrman, Susan Albers, Edward E. Lawler III, & Allan M. Mohrman, Jr. (1992). "Applying Employee Involvement in Schools." *Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 14(4), 347–360.

Mohrman, Susan Albers & Priscilla Wohlstetter, Eds. (1994). *School-Based Management: Organizing for High Performance*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Murphy, Joseph & Lynn Beck. (1995). *School-Based Management as School Reform*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Murphy, Joseph & Karen Seashore Louis. (1994). "Transformational Change and the Evolving Role of the Principal: Early Empirical Evidence." In Joseph Murphy and Karen Seashore Louis, Eds. *Reshaping the Principalship*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Newmann, Fred & Gary Wehlage. (1995). *Successful School Restructuring*. Madison, WI: Wisconsin Center for Education Research, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Odden, Allan & Eleanor Odden. (1996). "Applying the High Involvement Framework to Local Management of Schools in Victoria, Australia." *Educational Research and Evaluation*, 2(2), 150–184.

Odden, Allan, Priscilla Wohlstetter & Eleanor Odden. (1995). "Key Issues in Effective School-Based Management." *School Business Affairs*, 61(5), 4–16.

Odden, Eleanor & Priscilla Wohlstetter. (1995). "Strategies for Making School Based Management Work." *Educational Leadership*, 52(5), 32–36.

Robertson, Peter J., Priscilla Wohlstetter, & Susan Albers Mohrman. (1995). "Generating Curriculum and Instructional Changes Through School-Based Management." *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 31(3), 375–404.

Smylie, Mark, Virginia Lazarus & Jean Brownlee-Conyers. (1996). "Instructional Outcomes of School-Based Participative Decision Making." *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 18(3), 181–198.

Summers, Anita A. & Amy W. Johnson. (1996). "The Effects of School Based Management Plans." In Eric Hanushek and Dale Jorgenson, Eds. *Improving America's Schools: The Role of Incentives* (pp. 75–96). Washington, DC: National Research Council.

Wohlstetter, Priscilla. (1995). "Getting School-Based Management Right: What Works and What Doesn't." *Phi Delta Kappan*, 77(9), 22–24, 26.

Wohlstetter, Priscilla, Susan Mohrman & Peter Robertson. (1996). "Successful School-Based Management: Lessons for Restructuring Urban Schools." In Diane Ravitch and Joseph Viteritti, Eds. *New Schools for a New Century: The Redesign of Urban Education*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Wohlstetter, Priscilla & Allan R. Odden. (1992). "Rethinking School-Based Management Policy and Research." *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 28(4), 529–549.

Wohlstetter, Priscilla, Roxanne Smyer, & Susan Albers Mohrman. (1994). "New Boundaries for School-Based Management: The High Involvement Model." *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 16(3), 268–286.

ON GOOD PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Corcoran, Thomas B. (1995). *Helping Teachers Teach Well: Transforming Professional Development*. New Brunswick, NJ: Consortium for Policy Research in Education Policy Briefs.

Corcoran, Thomas & Margaret Goertz. (1995). "Instructional Capacity and High Performance Schools." *Educational Researcher*, 24(9), 27–31.

Darling-Hammond, Linda & Milbrey McLaughlin. (1995). "Policies That Support Professional Development in an Era of Reform." *Phi Delta Kappan*, 76(8), 597–604.

Little, Judith Warren. (1993). "Teachers' Professional Development in a Climate of Educational Reform." *Educational Analysis and Policy Analysis*, 15(2), 129–152.

ON REVISED EDUCATION FINANCE AND RESOURCE REALLOCATION

Miles, Karen Hawley. (1995). "Freeing Resources for Improving Schools: A Case Study of Teacher Allocation in Boston Public Schools." *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 17(4), 476–493.

Miles, Karen Hawley & Linda Darling-Hammond. (1997). *Rethinking School Resources in High Performing Schools*. Madison, WI: Consortium for Policy Research in Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Odden, Allan. (1994). "Decentralized Management and School Finance." *Theory Into Practice*, 33(2), 104–111.

Odden, Allan. (1995). *Linking School Finance to Systemic Reform: A Commentary*. Philadelphia, PA: Consortium for Policy Research in Education, Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania.

Odden, Allan. (1997). "How to Rethink School Budgets to Support School Transformation." Getting Better by Design "How-To" series, Alexandria, VA: New American Schools.

Odden, Allan & William Clune. (1995). "Improving Educational Productivity and School Finance." *Educational Researcher*, 24(9), 6–10, 22.

ON TEACHER COMPENSATION

Conley, Sharon & Allan Odden. (1995). "Linking Teacher Compensation to Teacher Career Development: A Strategic Examination." *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 17(2), 253–269.

Firestone, William. (1994). "Redesigning Teacher Salary Systems for Education Reform." *American Educational Research Journal*, 31(3), 549–574.

Kelley, Carolyn, and Allan Odden. (1995). *New Ideas for Reinventing Teacher Compensation*. Madison, WI: Consortium for Policy Research in Education.

Mohrman, Allan, Susan Albers Mohrman & Allan Odden. (1996). "Aligning Teacher Compensation with Systemic School Reform: Skill-Based Pay and Group-Based Performance Rewards." *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 18(1), 51–71.

Odden, Allan. (1996). "Incentives, School Organization and Teacher Compensation." In Susan Fuhrman and Jennifer O'Day, Eds. *Rewards and Reform: Creating Educational Incentives That Work*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Odden, Allan and Sharon Conley. (1992). "Restructuring Teacher Compensation Systems." In Allan Odden, Ed. *Rethinking School Finance: An Agenda for the 1990s*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Odden, Allan & Carolyn Kelley. (1997). *Paying Teachers for What They Know and Do: New and Smarter Compensation Strategies to Improve Schools*. Newberry Park, CA: Corwin Press.

New American Schools Designs

As of Fall 1997, New American Schools (NAS) is at work in over 700 schools around the country. NAS district partners commit to transforming a minimum of 30 percent of their schools within five years. Most partners are on track to meet and exceed this goal by year three. NAS schools reflect one of the eight designs below.

ATLAS Communities
The ATLAS design centers on pathways—groups of schools made up of high schools and the elementary and middle schools that feed into them. Teams of teachers from each pathway work together to design curriculum and assessments based on locally defined standards. The teachers in each pathway collaborate with parents and administrators to set and maintain sound management and academic policies, ultimately resulting in improved student performance.
For more information: (617) 969-7100;
e-mail: Atlas@edc.org; www.edc.org/FSC/ATLAS

Audrey Cohen College: Purpose-Centered Education
The Audrey Cohen College system of education focuses student learning on the study and achievement of meaningful "purposes" for each semester's academic goals. Students achieve their purpose by using their knowledge and skills to plan, carry out, and evaluate a constructive action to benefit the community and the larger world. Leadership is emphasized and students are expected to meet high academic standards.
For more information: (212) 343-1234;
e-mail: JanithJ@aol.com; www.audrey-cohen.edu

Co-NECT Schools
Assisting schools in creating and managing their own high-tech equipment and network, Co-NECT uses technology to enhance every aspect of teaching, learning, professional development, and school management. Co-NECT schools are organized around small clusters of students who are taught by a cross-disciplinary team. Most students stay in the same cluster for at least two years. Teaching and learning revolve around interdisciplinary projects that promote critical skills and academic understanding, as well as integrating technology.
For more information: (617) 873-2683;
e-mail: info@conect.bbn.com; http://co-nect.bbn.com

Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound
Built on 10 design principles, Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound (ELOB) operates on the belief that learning is an expedition into the unknown. ELOB draws on the power of purposeful, intellectual investigations—called learning expeditions—to improve student achievement and build character. Learning expeditions are long-term, academically rigorous, interdisciplinary studies that require students to work inside and outside the classroom. In ELOB schools, students and teachers stay together for more than one year, teachers work collaboratively, and tracking is eliminated.
For more information: (617) 576-1260;
e-mail: info@elob.ednet; http://hugse1.harvard.edu/~elob

Los Angeles Learning Centers
The Los Angeles Learning Centers (LALC) design is a comprehensive K–12 model for urban schools. The curriculum and instruction are designed to ensure that all students are taught in a K–12 community, enabling new strategies to overcome barriers by addressing the health and well-being of students and their families. Governance and management are also restructured to engage community members in decision making and to ensure that the design can improve and evolve. LALC also incorporates the extensive use of advanced technology as an essential element for implementation of the design.
For more information: (213) 622-5237;
e-mail: gpruitt@laedu.lalc.k12.ca.us; www.lalc.k12.ca.us

Modern Red Schoolhouse Institute
This design strives to help all students achieve high standards through the construction of a standards-driven curriculum; use of traditional and performance-based assessments; establishment of effective organizational patterns and professional-development programs; and implementation of effective community-involvement strategies. Students master a rigorous curriculum, develop character, and promote the principles of democratic government. These elements of the traditional red schoolhouse are combined with a high level of flexibility in organizing instruction and deploying resources; use of innovative teaching methodologies; student groupings for continuous progress; and advanced technology as a learning and instructional management tool.
For more information: (888) 275-6774;
e-mail: skilgore@mrsh.org; www.mrsh.org

National Alliance for Restructuring Education
This partnership of schools, districts, states, and leading national organizations works to change the education system from classroom to statehouse through a five-point set of priorities. Known as "design tasks," they are: standards and assessments, learning environments, high-performance management, community services and supports, and public engagement. The National Alliance seeks to enable all graduating high school students to attain the Certificate of Initial Mastery, a credential representing a high standard of academic accomplishment.
For more information: (202) 783-3668;
e-mail: nareinfo@ncee.org;
www.ncee.org/OurPrograms/narePage.html

Roots and Wings
This elementary school design builds on the widely used Success for All reading program and incorporates science, history, and mathematics to achieve a comprehensive academic program. The premise of the design is that schools must do whatever it takes to make sure all students succeed. To this end, Roots and Wings schools provide at-risk students with tutors, family support, and a variety of other services. While the "roots" of the design refer to mastery of basics, the "wings" represent advanced accomplishments that students achieve through interdisciplinary projects and a challenging curriculum provided by the design.
For more information: (410) 516-0274;
e-mail: rslavin@inet.ed.gov; http://scov.csos.jhu.edu/sfa

New American Schools

Papers in this series include . . .

- Design-Based Assistance as a Cornerstone of a School Improvement Strategy
- How to Create and Manage a Decentralized Education System
- How to Rethink School Budgets to Support School Transformation
- How to Rebuild a Local Professional Development Infrastructure
- How to Make the Link Between Standards, Assessments, and Real Student Achievement
- How to Create Incentives for Design-Based Schools
- How to Engage Educators, Parents, and the Community in Design-Based School Change

Accompanying this series are New American Schools Action Tools

To help you implement the ideas and suggestions recommended in the Getting Better by Design "How-To" series, New American Schools is creating hands-on Action Tools that complement and expand the use of the research papers. As they become available, each tool will be posted on the NAS web site, www.naschools.org.

For more information about the Getting Better by Design series . . .

For more information about the Getting Better by Design "How-To" papers and the Action Tools that will correspond with this series, or to obtain copies of the Getting Better by Design "How-To" papers, write to New American Schools, 1000 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 2710, Arlington, VA 22209 or call (703) 908-9500. NAS can also be reached by electronic mail at info@nasdc.org or via the Internet at www.naschools.org.

Education Commission of the States

This publication was made possible, in part, from funding received from the Education Commission of the States (ECS) through a generous grant from the Annenberg Foundation. ECS's role as a partner in the New American Schools effort is to support national dissemination of the NAS designs and to work with state policy makers to create the policy changes necessary to help the designs flourish.